

COMMITTEE REPORTS - CONSIDERATION

Committee

The Chairman of Committees (Hon J.A. Cowdell) in the Chair.

Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations - Financial Management of Prisons - Twenty-ninth Report

Resumed from 12 October on the following motion moved by Hon Mark Nevill -

That the report be noted.

Question put and passed.

Standing Committee on Constitutional Affairs - Denmark Agricultural School - Fifty-second Report

Hon M.D. NIXON: I move -

That the report be noted.

This report was tabled before the Parliament was last prorogued. At that stage we were halfway through the debate. However, because a vote was not taken, the report was never noted. There has been some progress since the report was tabled. Members will recall that in the original report the committee requested that the Minister for Education put a moratorium on any future development plans for the brick buildings, the subject of the report, until December, and the committee was pleased to note that the minister had agreed to that request. Matters have moved on since then.

These brick buildings were the first to be built in Denmark. Denmark is a timber town, so most of the buildings were constructed using timber. However, these are brick buildings. They are substantial government buildings that were built after the Second World War using what was termed an economy style of building. In other words, the buildings were utilitarian rather than grandiose like the University of Western Australia buildings. However, because they were government buildings, they were very well maintained.

One problem that arose was that the community took some time to get its act together, and there was division in the community about what should be done with these buildings. Because of that, by the time the petition reached the committee, a decision had been made by the Education Department to consider other uses for the buildings or, indeed, to knock them down. I understand technical and further education colleges have put a proposal to the Education Department that they will use the front building for the purposes of providing services to the Denmark district. Unfortunately, it is planned that the large and well-equipped kitchen will be stripped, and the expensive catering facilities used to upgrade the facilities at the Gnowangerup school. At this stage, the dormitory block, which would be an important part of the community's proposed operation, is to be demolished.

Time is running out. The report of the committee requested that the minister give the community until December to make a decision and put forward a business plan demonstrating that it will be able to maintain the buildings and put them to good use. The committee also recommended that the community obtain the support of the shire. While the shire recognises the value of the buildings, it does not want them to become a millstone around its neck. Therefore, it is necessary for the community group trying to preserve the buildings to work with the shire and to gain its blessing for the proposal.

I believe the report has achieved its purpose: It has provided the community with time to consider whether a suitable use can be found for those buildings. In my view, the front building - the administration and dining room block - has every chance of being retained. However, the dormitory block will be retained only if the community group can put forward a satisfactory business plan.

Question put and passed.

Standing Committee on Ecologically Sustainable Development - Management and Sustainability of the Western Rock Lobster - Sixth Report

Hon GREG SMITH: I move -

That the report be noted.

Members may remember the lengthy debate in this place about whether an inquiry should be held into the sustainability of the western rock lobster industry. Members on this side of the Chamber went to great pains to try to explain that the Western Australian rock lobster industry is one of the best managed and most sustainable rock lobster industries in the world and that it was on the cusp of receiving worldwide recognition.

As the committee started taking submissions and holding hearings, it became evident that people were offended by the suggestion that the industry may not be sustainable, or sustainably managed. Given the amount of time and resources it takes to investigate these things and to produce a report, I appeal to members to show some responsibility and ensure that the issues they send to committees are constructive and require investigation. None of the committee's recommendations contains anything about the sustainability of the rock lobster industry. Most of the people who put forward submissions were offended and disappointed that members opposite saw fit to ask the Standing Committee on Ecologically Sustainable Development to investigate the issue. As with all resources that are exploited or extracted in this State, the suggestion that something may be wrong with its management casts aspersions, whether or not there is a problem. It is easy to start a rumour about somebody or something, but hard to stop it because people assume that it could be true. They think that where there is smoke, there may be fire.

One of the concerns raised during the inquiry is something of which most of us were already aware; that is, the way the Rock Lobster Industry Advisory Committee operates in the coastal tour. It became obvious that a perception existed in the industry that RLIAC was somehow a representative body of the industry reporting to the minister. In reality, however, it is a ministerial advisory committee whose job is to advise the minister. Although the advisory committee's job entails seeking and giving information to the community and the licence holders in the rock lobster industry, it is not a representative body of the rock lobster industry. That was the crux of the disputes that existed in the rock lobster industry. Many of the disputes arose when pot reductions took place in 1993. A group was formed at that time which felt it should be compensated for its pot reductions or that the pot reduction laws should be changed. That was the impetus for change. By talking to members of RLIAC and Fisheries WA, the parliamentary committee found that unpopular decisions had to be made to manage the industry in a sustainable way. One of those unpopular decisions was to reduce pot numbers by 18 per cent. The unpopular decisions about the way in which the industry was managed were a common theme throughout the submissions to the committee as well as other issues.

I refer to the terms of reference concerning the possibility of establishing a seafood exchange. It was almost embarrassing when the proponent of that part of the inquiry attended the committee because he had no idea about what he wanted to do; someone had worked on a thesis for a university degree but had not thoroughly considered the process. As part of its terms of reference, the parliamentary committee had to inquire into a concept about which there was no information. It can be dangerous when members opposite put forward motions to consider and act upon matters that are not understood by the people who propose them.

Hon Kim Chance: Was the seafood exchange part of the motion?

Hon GREG SMITH: Yes, it was in the terms of reference. I am glad Hon Kim Chance is back from his urgent parliamentary business. The support for this motion from the majority of the House was disappointing. If members were to read the debates in *Hansard* prior to the motion for the inquiry being launched, they would accept that all the arguments put against it were proved to be 100 per cent correct. The committee reached the stage at which the chairman was embarrassed about being asked to support some of her colleagues and to consider something that obviously was not necessary.

The only area of contention the committee could find in the industry was the way that RLIAC conducts itself. Another issue that arose concerned the members of ethnic groups who attended the meetings who may not have been able to fully understand the information they were given. Also, people perceived that the coastal tour was an information gathering exercise, whereas it turned out to be an information giving exercise. It was interesting to note that the people who made the most noise did not take part in the process to try to change the system. A level of frustration existed due to the misunderstanding of RLIAC's role. I learnt something about RLIAC's role when I was on the committee because, until that stage, I was led to believe by rock lobster fishermen who talked to me privately, that that body would be used to try to implement change in the rock lobster industry. It is part of an education program, and most of the recommendations involve RLIAC, its role, the way it is constituted and the future development of a truly representative group of the rock lobster fishermen. Some members of RLIAC who came before the committee said their appointment to RLIAC seemed like a good idea at the time, but it almost became a poison chalice. They had the expectation that they would represent the industry, but they quickly learnt that their position was not to represent the industry or their section of it; it was to represent what was best for the industry as a whole.

The committee omitted to make one recommendation that probably would have been one of the best; that is, that Fisheries Western Australia be congratulated for its management of the rock lobster industry. It has received worldwide recognition as one of the best managed rock lobster industries in the world. The Marine Stewardship Council recognised that the industry is managed in a very sustainable way, and it has become a blueprint for how other fisheries could and should be operated.

One of the questions arising from the assessment related to the impact on other species in the marine food chain - for example, the octopus population or other fish that rely on rock lobsters to survive - if X number of rock lobsters were taken out of the water. Ongoing studies will be carried out in this area and, all in all, we should be proud of our rock lobster fisheries, the industry and the substantial contribution they make to Western Australia's economy. Most rock lobster fishermen are very proud of their industry and accept the decisions made, even though they may not like those decisions and they may be akin to a spoonful of castor oil to fix the problem. However, at the end of day their industry has become a very good industry.

The accuracy of the catch predictions within the industry is amazing. We have projections of the expected catch from year to year, and the graphs showing the actual catch almost match those projections. This shows we have a very good understanding of the industry. One factor that affects the industry now more than anything else, is the price of the product. A country with an economy as small as that in Australia, does not have much ability to affect the price. Issues were discussed about licences and the ability to market and sell rock lobsters. One of the committee's terms of reference was to discuss the deregulation of the processing sector of the rock lobster industry. It was found that some processing licences had not been issued or had lapsed. The terms of reference included inquiry into the sale and storage of live rock lobsters. It costs a lot of money to set up a system to store live rock lobsters and then sell them out of season.

The motion that instigated this inquiry was not well researched. The people who supported it did not understand what they were doing. At the end of the day, members on this side of Chamber who argued against sending the inquiry to a committee were proved to be 100 per cent correct in everything they said and clearly had an understanding of the industry and the issues surrounding it. In future, before supporting motions that require a committee to investigate matters, members opposite should carefully consider the issues and facts, rather than play politics with them. The committee system takes a lot of time and money and, as a taxpayer and a member of Western Australian community, I do not like to see money being spent on parliamentary committees with no tangible benefit to the industry or to the State.

Hon KIM CHANCE: I must admit to being stunned by the patronising and dismissive attitude of Hon Greg Smith towards a serious report into one of the most important industries in our State. I cannot believe that he has taken that approach. He dismissed the idea of the seafood exchange. He said that the proponents of the exchange did not understand what they were proposing. On my reading of the report, the proponent of the seafood exchange had a very clear idea of what was proposed. Indeed, it makes some sense. The committee's report did not indicate that the proposal did not make any sense.

The fishing industry - both commercial and recreational - must be viewed not as an industry in isolation but as an important component of the tourism industry. One of the strongest, albeit justified, criticisms drawn by our fishing towns, which also happen to be our coastal touring towns - it does not matter whether we are talking about Fremantle or Dongara - is that people who go into fishing towns expecting to be able to buy fresh fish cannot do so. I am sure Hon Greg Smith would be the first to agree with that.

I have not been to San Francisco, but I am told that the Fishermen's Wharf area of that city has made a mark in the world through its joint promotion of tourism and fishing. I understand that the proponent of the seafood exchange had something similar in mind.

Hon Greg Smith: Something like that is for the private sector to develop, not Governments.

Hon KIM CHANCE: I could not agree more. It must be developed by the private sector to make it work. However, the industry regulations must permit the private sector to do it. The proponent's argument is that the industry is so over-regulated that the private sector cannot develop that form of enterprise. The witness who suggested that has a point and it should not be dismissed.

I refer to page 75 of the report in which the committee dealt with its findings on the ability of fishers to store, feed and sell their product. Paragraph 4 at page 75 of the report states -

if the processing sector is deregulated, this will have a consequent impact on the cost of compliance which will ultimately be borne by commercial fishers under cost recovery principles;

Recommendation No 5 at the bottom of that page reads -

That the processing sector not be deregulated.

A number of other reasons within the findings support that. Paragraph 3 reads -

there is resistance to the deregulation of the processing sector from both industry and fishers;

Whether I agree with the committee's findings and its ultimate recommendation in that matter, I draw the attention of the House to something I did not learn until about three days ago. I was sent a letter that the Minister for Fisheries wrote to the Chairman of the Western Australian Rock Lobster Development Association

in which the minister advised that the entire rock lobster processing industry for the domestic market would be deregulated from the middle of next year. Notwithstanding the evidence the committee heard, the minister intends to deregulate. The minister did not use the word “deregulate”, but he proposes to make available an unlimited number of domestic processing licences, which can be equated to deregulation. It is difficult to perceive the difference. It is open regulation rather than deregulation.

That raises a number of serious issues. I am inclined towards the view of the committee, which has done a very good job in its analysis of this aspect of the industry. For reasons justified by national competition policy, and for other reasons to which the committee referred, problems may arise with over-regulation in the industry; however, the alternatives of open regulation and deregulation are extreme. I am concerned because if the domestic processing industry is very lightly regulated, if regulated at all, where does that place existing processors concerning their competitive advantage vis-a-vis the domestic market? Unless those people holding the unrestricted domestic licences are required to maintain export standards, existing processors who will be required to maintain the higher standards will be placed at a significant economic disadvantage. This situation relates to the old arguments in the abattoir industry: Certain abattoirs must maintain export standards effectively set by the United States Department of Agriculture and the European Union, and their cost structures do not compare with those of abattoirs running on the interstate or common abattoir standard, as it is variously known. The difference in killing costs between such abattoirs, as Hon Murray Nixon knows better than I, is at a ratio of 2:1 or 3:1. I am not sure whether that is correct, but those ratios were cited to me recently. Although these are different industries, the abattoir industry illustrates the additional costs to be imposed on the rock lobster processors. It is unfair to expose the existing processors to competition in the local market - certainly, only a small part of that market - from operators who will not be required to meet the costs associated with those standards. In fact, I have a question directed to the Minister for Fisheries on this very issue which I hope to ask early next week as it raises some serious issues.

The findings and recommendations of the committee are very good, for which the committee should be applauded. It indicates the seriousness of a small part of the entire equation of the internal and external management of the rock lobster fishery. This matter needed consideration. In defence of the movers of the motion to establish this inquiry, that is one example - I will raise another example when the opportunity arises - indicating the importance of proceeding with this inquiry.

Another issue is less easy to define in the justification for the report. A royal commission had already been held into the industry back in the 1960s, I think. Although the industry is quite unified now, on occasions the industry has been torn apart by dissension. As Hon Greg Smith has accurately indicated, on many occasions the reason for the division has been ignorance and a lack of understanding. When I get a chance to stand again, I shall go into that matter.

Hon DEXTER DAVIES: This extensive report on the western rock lobster industry was made following a very extensive debate in this Chamber. Without being flippant, we again conducted that debate during the committee process. We had virtually conducted the inquiry in this Chamber before the subject came before the committee, because very little that was new came out in the inquiry. The subject came before the Standing Committee on Ecologically Sustainable Development. As has been confirmed by Hon Kim Chance’s speech, the subject should have gone before the Standing Committee on Public Administration because that committee should have considered all the issues that Hon Kim Chance raised. The ecologically sustainable aspect of the subject became a very small part of the committee’s inquiry. We were at the bounds of our terms of reference when dealing with the issues simply because the subject was probably before the wrong committee. However, the debate was conducted in this Chamber and the argument was lost. Had the subject been before the Standing Committee on Public Administration, it could have dealt with many of the issues raised by Hon Kim Chance far better than the Standing Committee on Ecologically Sustainable Development because we were continually bouncing off the boundary of our terms of reference. We did our best.

As regards the economically sustainable aspect of the motion, I agree with Hon Greg Smith. Time and again the evidence overwhelmingly suggested that the issues that needed to be addressed had been taken up by the industry, were being addressed and had been for a couple of years. We recommended in general that the industry continue the action it had instigated and put in process. We recommended that it be followed through. The evidence given to the committee indicated the industry was very well managed, because its management had recognised the problems prior to the committee being formed and was dealing with them. The best the committee could do in most cases was to recommend that the industry continue with the action it was taking.

The committee dealt with the accountability of Fisheries WA and its rapid expansion. It was difficult to work out the ecologically sustainable aspect of the rapid expansion of the department because clearly it is a public administration matter. We took the opportunity to investigate, and the vast majority of evidence given to the committee indicated that the department had been outstanding in its approach to the process. The expansion in every case was legitimate; in fact, in many cases in the recreational area, where the huge expansion has taken

place, the department needs to expand a bit faster to cope with the problems of the industry. People indicated they wanted more expansion because the recreational fishing industry is one of the fastest expanding activities on the coast. It will require extensive scrutiny and good management to ensure that it expands appropriately, not only for the industry but also, as Hon Kim Chance said, to ensure ecologically sustainable development. Expansion of tourism facilities up that coastline must be managed effectively. After consideration of the first term of reference, Fisheries WA was given a big tick and it was recommended that it continue with the practices it had been implementing.

The committee looked at the potential conflict of interest that might result from Fisheries WA's being a regulator and having involvement in projects and marketing. Once again, it was difficult to address the ecologically sustainable development issue because that is very much an administrative process. The evidence indicated that the projection of the industry in a good light worldwide was welcomed, justified and applauded.

The committee's consideration of the proportional redirection of better interests development funding to the Western Australian Rock Lobster Fishers Federation to enable it to better represent the interests of the rock lobster fisheries took very little time. The committee took extensive evidence, 99 per cent of which indicated that it was completely out of order. It did not attract any support in the industry - in fact, the federation conceded that it was probably inappropriate.

The ability for Western Australian fishers to store, feed and sell their product anywhere within Western Australia was also addressed.

The committee considered the establishment of the seafood exchange. The proposition as delivered was less than members had expected, and the proponent conceded that it was not of an appropriate standard. It was not that the idea was wrong -

Hon Kim Chance: It was a concept rather than a proposition.

Hon DEXTER DAVIES: The proponent indicated that his proposition was not complete. That may have been because he did not think this inquiry would take place. That was embarrassing for the proponent and the committee. It could have been presented much more effectively. The committee's recommendation was that the proponent should complete the proposal and present it through the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council and the rock lobster subcommittee. The committee pointed out that the proposition should have gone through the industry process, which had not happened. The proposition may have merit, but it was presented in a very poor light in the proponent's haste to progress.

The committee's investigations demonstrated at every turn that opportunities existed within the industry structure to pursue these issues. Many people came to the committee with complaints, which was inappropriate. When we investigated those complaints, we found that those people had gone through the appropriate process, but at every turn they had received an answer that they did want to hear, and they saw the committee as a last resort to which they could go to have their day in the sun. However, as Hon Kim Chance and I have spoken about on many occasions, the committee is not the appropriate place for that process. In this case, we found that when they had gone through the appropriate process, the matter had been dealt with perfectly legitimately. However, because many of the people had received an answer that they did not want to hear, they had come to the committee as a last resort.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: I also am rather amazed at the down-reading of the report, because, as Hon Dexter Davies has pointed out, it raised a number of issues. I will deal first with the sustainability issue. One of the things that disappointed me about the sustainability aspect of the report was that it did not properly acknowledge the basis of the concern about sustainability, which was not that we did not already have an industry that is probably the best managed in the world at this point, but that because the relationship between the fishers, the department and the Rock Lobster Industry Advisory Committee is so bad, the required work is not being done. When Professor Carl Walters came to Australia to examine the industry for Fisheries WA, he made a number of reports, and one of the key findings of those reports was that in order to get the amount of data that is required to maintain a fishery on a sustainable basis, the industry must be on side, and people must be prepared to carry out research on board their vessels on their everyday fishing trips and to record that information. The information that has come to me is that many fishers are, at the very least, half-hearted about it, and some are even messing about with some of the research, because they are so fed up with the way they are being ignored on the issues that they are putting to the department.

Hon Kim Chance: Were you referring to Dr McCay's evidence?

Hon J.A. SCOTT: No. I was putting the general concept about why there is a concern about sustainability, which relates to these other issues. For instance, I think Hon Dexter Davies said that he could not see what marketing had to do with it. Marketing can have a great deal to do with the sustainability of the fishery, because if fishers are seeking to sell crayfish at that time of the year when the prices are highest and they hammer the

fishery during that time, they can cause a problem for the fishery. That also relates to deregulation, because the people who want deregulation are the people who want to be able to catch the crayfish when they are there, store them and feed them, and then sell them when the price is high rather than take the vessels out to sea when the ocean is more dangerous and put crews and the ecology at risk if ships sink and so on.

Hon Kim Chance: The only reason I raised that reference to Dr McCay is that her evidence is reprinted at page 39 of the report, and it goes to the core of the issue, as far as I am concerned, about ownership of regulations.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: That is right. This was really what the mood was in a great part of the industry, because the fishers were feeling that they were not being listened to.

Hon Greg Smith indicated that nothing came out of the inquiry; yet he said he learnt a great deal about how he had misunderstood the role of the Rock Lobster Industry Advisory Committee, as had many of the fishers. The fishers wanted to change the process and they wanted real representation. They had no peak body that recognised their interests, whereas processors, the pearling industry and others do have peak bodies. Most importantly, if the member believes it was a waste of time, he should look at some of the minister's responses, like his response to the recommendation that there be more inclusive, consultative coastal tours which respect the cultural diversity of the southern/Fremantle region. The response was a proposal to hold an industry convention each year, instead of the RLIAC coastal tour, because the convention had the potential to be more inclusive and to improve consultation. It would give the whole industry an opportunity to vote on its position on the RLIAC proposal.

Hon Kim Chance: That is the rhetoric; the fact is entirely different.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: Is it?

Hon Kim Chance: The minister's response was to shut down the coastal tour and Fremantle did not get one.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: Right.

Hon M.D. Nixon: That was the response. Nobody went to the ones held at the time.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: The point is that people are not represented by RLIAC. As has been pointed out, the members cannot take information back to the fishers about what has happened at RLIAC meetings, or at meetings with the minister, because that is not their role. That has been clearly identified. Steps are being taken to deal with that.

The next recommendation was about whether the industry steering committee should devise a new unified body, acceptable to the western rock lobster fishers. A ballot on the formation of a sector peak body will be held in the near future. If the peak body is formed, it is expected that it will devise its own consultative mechanisms to represent the views of fishers. That is a positive move. It is a concrete change and one that will make a big difference to the ecological problems, like sustainability, that I spoke of. Fishers must feel part of the process and must want to be involved in the gathering of information that would assist the department to provide the best data to run the fishery.

Hon Dexter Davies: That point was made by way of interjection. That committee was in place before the committee -

Hon J.A. SCOTT: I know full well. I was at the formative meeting. However, if it is to occur properly, the minister must agree to talk to the fishers. It is one thing for the fishers to set up a peak body, and another for them to have a formalised process through which they can speak to the minister.

Hon Dexter Davies: You still misunderstand the process.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: The fishers want a way to hear from the minister. To them he is a mythical figure, an evanescent figure, who appears in some places but disappears when the fishers want to speak to him.

Recommendation 4 states -

That newly appointed members to the Rock Lobster Industry Advisory Committee participate in an externally facilitated induction program which explains the processes and responsibilities involved in becoming a member.

In response, five newly appointed RLIAC members attended an externally conducted management advisory committee training program. This training formed a major component of the induction program for the new members and included an explanation of the processes and responsibilities involved in becoming a member.

Recommendation 5 was -

That the processing sector not be deregulated.

The minister answered by saying that the Government had noted the recommendation of the parliamentary inquiry but was yet to determine its position on deregulation of the processing sector under the national competition policy review. I made the point during the debate that we may be forced to look at deregulation, and that is exactly what appears to be happening.

Hon Kim Chance: The minister has made the decision even though he is yet to table the report.

Hon J.A. SCOTT: This is the point. The problems were mostly based around communication, and communication can have a great deal to do with ecological sustainability. I have touched on only a few of the ways that could happen.

Hon DEXTER DAVIES: The communication factor was recognised by the members of this committee. The propositions put forward are a reflection of what the Rock Lobster Industry Advisory Committee and the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council had put in place. The committee put in place the existing practices in the industry. I emphasise the communication process; we spent most of our time talking about this. RLIAC is a ministerial advisory committee. The recommendation by the industry, RLIAC, and everybody present, was that the rock lobster industry should have its own representative group. The subcommittee of WAFIC is represented by the president and another member of each fishing association. A lot of them choose not to go -

Hon Kim Chance: It is not independent. When it criticised the minister it was shut down.

Hon DEXTER DAVIES: It was never shut down.

Hon Kim Chance: Yes, it was.

Hon DEXTER DAVIES: No, it was not; the member should ask the fishermen. We spent weeks asking people to appear before the committee and say whether that was right or not, and time after time they said that it was not true. They came in at fishing industry expense, at the State's expense and at our expense to tell us that view; that is why the committee was established, if it is necessary to justify it. After spending that money, members should take note when we relay the information. That process exists, but it is not very effective because the fishermen choose not to use it. Those people were invited to the RLIAC meeting. The people from WAFIC and from all those associations had an open invitation to attend the RLIAC meeting and participate.

Hon J.A. Scott: But nothing they say gets done.

Hon DEXTER DAVIES: As I have said before, when people disagree with RLIAC and complain, the answers they receive may not be the ones they wish to hear, so they say that the process does not work. Hon Kim Chance, along with other people from the Agricultural Region, have seen associations come and go for that very reason. They say, "If these people will not believe me, I will go and form my own association"; and in primary industry this happens with monotonous regularity. They form their own splinter groups. In this case people appeared before the committee and, at the end of the day, they demonstrated - even the people who were complaining - that they do not avail themselves of that information. When an issue arises with which the majority do not agree, these splinter groups want to be able to beat the system. That became very clear, but the vast majority of the people in the industry have recognised why they must go through this consultative process to take it out of the "maybe" area. As the report says, it is up to the industry to decide. It was not up to the committee or the Parliament to tell these people what to do when they were in the process of deciding their own destiny. The WAFIC rock lobster subcommittee process was in place, and we did not think the committee should interfere in that process.

It went through the committee and the report is now being considered. It was considered at the coastal committee meetings by those people who took the trouble to attend. The findings were put to the fishermen. At the end of the day they have the option to participate in the process. As was continually pointed out, communication is a two-way thing. It is very difficult to communicate with people if they are invited to a meeting but do not attend. If people do not want to participate, it may be because they do not want to hear what will be said or are afraid that their arguments will be shot down. An inclusive process exists and invitations were issued. The industry is aware of the perceptions that were outlined by Hon Jim Scott. It was invited to attend meetings so that the matters could be addressed. We cannot communicate with people if they do not attend. The open invitation has been there for two years. Some preferred to have an inquiry. That is what upset a lot of fishermen. I think Hon Jim Scott is still confusing the process of the ministerial committee with the industry's peak body. The fishing industry should put energy into its own representative body rather than avoiding the Rock Lobster Industry Advisory Committee by claiming that it does not listen to it. The situation is a repeat of what was seen in the agricultural industry in respect of representation through associations. If Hon Kim Chance and I had the answer, we would be popular fellows. People in these industries cannot be satisfied all the time but it is necessary for people to participate in the process and not pull out and knock what is there. There is genuine recognition of that by all who attended. A lot of people were satisfied with the process. Those who belittled it were asked why they did so. Many people are happy that what they represent has been vindicated by the process

and the management of the fishery. They are pleased that the role of the Marine Stewardship Council in the ecological sustainability of the industry has been recognised. As part of the accreditation, the industry has accepted that it must continually meet the quality assurance standards that are set. The industry took that on willingly and should be congratulated for getting in front of the game and promoting the process. The entire industry was involved. It was not popular among the fishermen when it was first taken on. The industry pushed the process along. It has created a good environment for marine parks to be developed without conflict, as the industry is onside. The industry should be congratulated for its foresight in providing an environment in which its style of management is a marketing plus rather than a marketing negative. It has been turned into a positive for the entire industry.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.